



New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Patty Mojta, Co-Chair
Sanford Starr, Co-Chair

February 2, 2023
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Minutes

In Attendance:

Suzanne Conrad
Diane Dellano
Nicole Epps
Aldina Hovde
Corissa Kazar
Jeanne McMahon
Patty Mojta
Kim Pinto
Dave Seegert
Svetlana Shpiegel
Sandy Starr
Tiffany Tucker
Wendi White

Consultant
Advocates for Children of NJ
World Childhood Foundation USA
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
embrella
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
NJ CAP
Preferred Behavioral Health
Montclair State University
NJ Department of Children and Families
Pediatrician
NJ Department of Corrections

Guests:

Katie Bourgalt
Benita Miller
Sharese Porter
Hannah Korn-Hellner
Miguelina Maldonado
Lisa Goldblatt Grace

NJ Department of Children and Families
NJ Department of Children and Families
Advocates for Children of NJ – Parent Ambassador
Advocates for Children of NJ
Advocates for Children of NJ
My Life, My Choice

Staff:

Daniel Yale

NJ Department of Children and Families

"In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Trenton Times and the Newark Star Ledger and posted at the Department of State, 125 West State St., 1st Floor, Trenton, New Jersey."

**Please note the meeting is being recorded for the transcription of minutes. Please be sure to state your name prior to making comments, motions and seconding votes.*



Welcome and Introductions

Patty Mojta welcomed members and each member provided a brief introduction.

Review December 1, 2022 meeting minutes

The minutes from the December 1, 2022 meeting were approved without edit.

NJTFCAN Updates

Patty provided Committee members with updates from the previous NJTFCAN meeting. Patty informed members that she provided a presentation on the Mandated Supporter concept, which was received with an enthusiastic response from Task Force members. Additionally, Patty informed members that the Task Force voted to approve the use of the Children’s Trust Fund to select an evidence-based model to train clinicians to respond to child-on-child sexual abuse to reduce recidivism. Patty stated that the Task Force discussed the Prevention Committee becoming involved in the prevention of child sexual abuse. This would include a workgroup to explore child sexual abuse prevention efforts. Svetlana and Tiffany volunteered to participate on a workgroup. Patty asked the remaining members to email her, Dan or Sandy if they have any questions about the workgroup.

Youth and Family Participation Presentations

Patty explained that as the Committee continues to work through the priorities of the Prevention Plan, this meeting will discuss Priority 2 – Youth and Family Participation. The planning committee invited two guests to participate in this meeting to discuss the work that they are doing in this area. Following each presentation, members were able to ask questions and discuss the information presented in more detail.

Overview of My Life My Choice survivor leadership model

Lisa Goldblatt Grace, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director

My Life, My Choice is an organization focused on ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children. They offer a continuum of services that focus on giving young people the tools that they need to reduce the likelihood that they will become exploited and also focuses on men standing together to shift the narrative around trafficking. They provide direct services to young people of all genders who experience exploitation, with the cornerstone of that work being the survivor mentoring program. In this program, survivors of the commercial sex industry are full-time employees that are trained to provide one-on-one support for survivors for as long as the survivor is interested. The program creates a “ladder of opportunity” for survivors on their team by promoting survivors into different areas of leadership within the organization.

Lisa spoke about their authentic survivor leadership in which they focus on three areas:

- Life experience



- Training/field experience
- Practice Wisdom

Lisa also spoke about the key values that are required of allies to this work:

- Humility
- Displaying mutual respect
- High levels of expectation
- Do no harm
- Leveraging personal privilege

ACNJ Parent Leadership Council

Sharese Porter, ACNJ Parent Advocate

The Parent Leadership Council (PLC) is made up of concerned parents and caregivers where they are empowered to identify and improve issues and concerns for families with young children. They are liaisons between organizations that support the work and legislators, community members, parents, guardians, and caregivers. They are hoping to build a bridge of communication, resiliency, and be a resource for families. The Council hold monthly meetings and are provided with trainings on the legislative process, budget hearings, etc. Sharese also provided a detailed description of the structure of the PLC. Committee members were provided with an explanation of how council members are compensated for participation.

Through the Parent Leadership Council, Sharese was able to be a voice for not only her family, but other families in the community. Sharese became aware of neighbors that were having issues and was able to provide them with resources or make connections to organizations that would provide assistance. This also opened up a conversation with her own children to let them know that she is advocating for them and for others in the community.

Sharese stated that because of the structure of the PLC, it breaks down their role as advocates into something that is very attainable. One of the strongest points of the council is that they start from a framework of where people are. The mantra, “whatever works best for you and your family” is heard repeatedly throughout this work. One of the takeaways is that there is often apprehension when including parents or community members when trying to build councils, coalitions, or workgroups. The PLC is one example where it can work. In the PLC they have shared decision making in all aspects of how the council is governed.

Diane explained that ACNJ wants to step back and let families step up to tell them what they need. They want everything that they do to be parent informed, parent led, and parent driven. This is something that is evolving as it is not how things have been done in the past. ACNJ is learning as they go from parents like Sharese that are giving up their time to share their experiences, their thoughts, and their wisdom around what families need. Diane also explained that the Pritzger Foundation is helping to



fund this work and the Shuman Foundation that provided resources for the Parent Ambassador Program. The Pritzger Foundation also provided a planning grant which will be entirely parent lead including the design of how the process will take place.

Q&A with panelists

At the conclusion of the panelist presentations, committee members were given the opportunity to discuss the materials presented and ask questions of the presenters.

Group Discussion Questions

Patty and Sandy guided members through the following series of questions and discussions relating to the presentations:

- One thing that stood out during the presentations?
- How do these efforts align with the prevention plan strategic priorities?
- What gives you pause or concern?
- What are the implications of these efforts?
- What are the gaps or limitations?
- Recommendations to the Task Force?
 - Genuine, authentic approach to involving parents
 - Provide training for organizations that want to include parents in an authentic way
 - Provide language learning program for staff that want to learn to communicate with families that speak languages other than English

Agenda for next meeting

Sandy explained that the plan for the next meeting will be to address the third priority of the Prevention Plan - promoting developmentally based, trauma-informed and healing centered prevention practices. Sandy asked for volunteers to join the workgroup to develop the agenda for the next meeting.

Announcements

Diane announced that ACNJ is recruiting for Strolling Thunder 2023. Diane will share the application with members.

Meeting Adjourned – Next meeting May 4, 2023